

The Write Touch

YOUR THOUGHTS, YOUR STYLE, OUR FINISHING TOUCH!

Woman of the Year Acceptance Speech

(excerpt)

What a privilege it is for me to stand at this podium today, where so many of the most essential elements of my life converge. My husband, Phil, is serving as M. C. this afternoon, my daughter, Melissa, has introduced me. I am sharing today's tribute with my long-time friend, Micki Moore and, of course, I'm being honoured by ORT, an organization whose mission of Tikkun Olam—of repairing the world-- really speaks to me on so many levels.

Let me tell you why.

As a woman, I understand in my core what it is to constantly reinvent oneself. Biologically, women's lives simply play out differently than men's. We are challenged to create an existence that addresses not only our basic physiological needs – those of shelter and nutrition, but also to find a place for ourselves that includes the possibility of having and raising children at the same time as we struggle to create a life of meaningful contribution and creativity. And we want to do it all *very, very* well. We want to take care of our families both emotionally and financially, we want to set an example for our children and for future generations, and we want to be of benefit to those with whom our lives' paths cross.

When I became re-involved in ORT about eight years ago, I found myself at a place in my life when working a 9-5 job was no longer a necessity or a desire, when my children had long

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been looking after their own daily needs and when time opened up for me. I quickly discovered that though I love my golf and sculpture, I was not content to devote that time only to leisure pursuits, but felt strongly the responsibility to contribute in some tangible way to society, and also, to model my life in a way that I hoped would inspire my children and grandchildren.

Luckily, ORT found me, decades after my initial involvement as a young mother in the 60's in Montreal. It's difficult to find the words to describe this remarkable organization. ORT is an institution that cares about families, and to me, there is nothing more important. While our world, sadly, is plagued with the horrors of war, poverty, and health crises, and all the ramifications that these ongoing challenges bring, ORT focuses a shining light on training, on making people viable, productive, and able to look after themselves and their loved ones. It teaches them to be role models for their children.

Rather than being bombarded by the unending challenges mankind faces, I can take a virtual tour around the world and be assured that ORT is leaving universal footprints, and step-by-step making strides to propel the unemployed into the workforce.